ABSTRACT

Systems, methods and apparatuses are provided for allowing a user to supervise personal exposure to a program exhibited by a consumer electronics device, such as, e.g., a television system. The consumer electronics device includes "V–chip" circuitry that analyzes a program signal and either blocks or passes the program signal based on certain content and time based criteria. In this connection, a user can program the "V–chip" circuitry with the content– and time–based criteria in the form of one or more content–based specifications, which specify a rating and/or a subject matter category, and finite time range specifications, which are associated with the content–based specifications. The "V–chip" circuitry receives one or more content–based indicators, which are indicative of a rating and/or a subject matter category of the program, and a reference time from an external source, such as the program signal. The "V–chip" circuitry compares the content–based indicators with the content–based specifications when the reference time falls within one of the finite time ranges. Based on this comparison, the "V–chip" circuitry either passes the program signal to an output device for transformation of the program signal into the program or blocks the program signal from being sent to the output device.